

FS-405

BIOGRAPHIC DATA

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64-1952

Post: HICOG Bonn, Germany
Date: December 1, 1952
Reporting Officer: W.J. MuellerName MEISSNER, Hans-Otto
(Surname) (Given name)Nationality German Title DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BYPosition Free-lance writer
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2C
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2006Personal data:

Born June 4, 1909, Strasbourg. Father: Otto Meissner, until 1945 chief of Hitler's Presidential Chancellery. Married Estelle Dittenberger, a Swiss national, September 23, 1937. Daughter Andrea, born March 1, 1943 at Como. Meissner and his wife were divorced in 1946. It is believed that his ex-wife is blackmailing him as he is reputed to have been denazified through false records of which she is presumably aware.

Present address: 58 Widenmayerstrasse, Munich.

Education:

Arndt Gymnasium (Berlin) graduate (Abitur), 1929. Studied law and national economy, Universities of Berlin, Freiburg, Heidelberg, Goettingen, Cambridge, Grenoble, Lausanne; LL.D Goettingen, 1934.

Travels:

As of 1945 he had visited Turkey, Greece, Finland, the Baltic States, France, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, China, Korea, Manchuria, Mongolia, Oceania, Netherlands, East Indies, Philippines, Siam, Indo-China, India, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Iran, Soviet Union (Moscow, Kiev, Baku, Rostov, Leningrad). Summer 1951: Italy. In August-September 1952 he again visited Thailand.

NSDAP Affiliations:

NSDAP No. 3760629, December 1, 1936. SS No. 241955, highest rank Hauptsturmfuehrer (May 1, 1940); served in the SD Hauptamt (Main Office, Security Service) of SS and with SD units in the field during World War II. Member of Tokyo local branch of NSDAP 1936-38.

Languages:

Fluent English; French; Italian; oral Japanese; some Russian.

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Military service:

Voluntary service, 8 months, 1935-36. Highest rank: Reserve 1st Lieutenant, Eastern Front, for shorter and longer periods 1940-1944; also Abwehr (Counter-intelligence) officer in OKW Amt Ausland (Foreign Department of Armed Services Supreme Command).

Decorations:

"Purple Heart", War Service Medal II with Swords; Hungarian, Croatian and Rumanian decorations. Order of the Japanese Crown IV Class. Italian and Yugoslavian Awards.

Publications:

"The Devil's Companion", a biography of Frau Goebbels, 1952; "So Beats Germany's Heart", 1952.

Career:

July 1933	Referendar (1st state law examination), Celle.
1933-34	Referendar (junior court official), Werder a. & H..
Feb. 15, 1934	Entered Foreign office as Attache.
Aug. 8, 1935-	
Apr 6, 1936	Attache, London
March 1936	Diplomatic-Consular examination, with grade of "sufficient".
Apr-Nov 1936	Assigned to Foreign Office.
Dec 28, 1936	Secretary of Legation.
Sept 1938	Embassy Tokyo.
July 4, 1938	Permanent rank of Secretary of Legation
Mar-Sept 1939	Embassy London.
Sept 1939-	
Mar 1940	Foreign Office
Mar 26, 1940	Embassy Moscow
June 1941	(Political leader in mission charge of repatriation)
Aug 10, 1941	Gesandtschaftsrat (Counselor of Legation)
Dec 8, 1941-	
Aug 25, 1944	
(with numerous interruptions)	Consul, Milan, (in charge of information and cultural work)
May 1, 1944	Consul, Class I.
Late 1944	Assigned to Honorary Consulate, Cadiz, Spain (no indication that he arrived there).
1945 - date	Free-lance contributor to illustrated periodical "Revue", Munich.
Feb 1948	Interrogated by office of U.S. Chief of Counsel for War Crimes, Nuremberg.
Summer 1951	Visited Mussolini's widow in Italy in order to prepare an article for "Revue".
1952	Visit to Thailand

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Remarks:

Meissner has a long Nazi record both as the son of Otto Meissner and as a Ribbentrop Foreign Office man.

A high-ranking U.S. official made the following statement: "I have known Meissner since Moscow in 1940 where he was generally regarded as Ribbentrop agent in the German Embassy. He has recently written a highly questionable volume "So Beats Germany's Heart" which depicts him as anti-Nazi. However, in one personal conversation I had with him he seems to have changed little. He does not enjoy a very good reputation in Munich but is apparently on good terms with the Italian Consulate, where I met him. He strikes me as a rather odious individual." 1/

As a free-lance contributor to "Revue" he is reported to receive up to 1000 DM per month and to have an automobile at his disposal. He is reported to represent a very national tendency and is alleged to be a national propagandist and "sign board" for "Revue". "Revue" is alleged to be the pay office for certain national circles. Meissner is also reputed to have close contact with inmates of the Hohenasberg internment camp in which certain of the National Socialist elite were together. 2/

Meissner is trying by every means to re-enter the German Foreign Office and is apparently receiving support in his efforts. 2/ It is not yet known whether this support comes from present Foreign Office circles.

Until October 1951 he lived in a trailer at Neuhaus near Schliersee, Upper Bavaria, on his father's estate which is now occupied by refugees. His father, who was acquitted of war crimes charges, is ill and living in Bad Wiessee.

Extreme caution in dealing with subject is indicated.

Principal sources:

1/ American Consulate General, Munich

2/ Official German agency.

Others: German Foreign Office (pre-1945) Personnel Files.

Prepared by Walter J. Mueller

Approved:

Norris B. Chipman, Chief
Division of Internal German Affairs
Office of Political Affairs

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